

*The Strange World of Ivan Ivanov*  
By G. Warren Nutter

World, \$5.00

## SOVIET ECONOMY CLOSE UP

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Secretary Laird should be congratulated: For the first time in history, a specialist in Soviet affairs is serving in the upper ranks of the Pentagon. It is still more significant that in his capacity as Assistant Secretary for International Security Affairs, the very knowledgeable Dr. G. Warren Nutter will coordinate the military and political strategies of the United States. The ISA slot has been traditionally in the hands of that particular American breed who are persuaded that a deal with the USSR—any deal on disarmament—would end the Communist threat. Under the Johnson Administration, the ISA office was the most important "dove" beachhead within the government.

There have been those who reasoned that the Communist economy is so strong that it can match every American effort. McNamara, arguing against the ABM, held that if we were to strengthen our defenses, the Soviets would "simply" add additional offensive weapons and thus nullify our efforts. Apparently the Soviet Union could do what we can't afford, namely add arms *ad lib*. There have also been those who predicted that the Soviet economy was about to overtake the American economy; hence, if the United States were to survive, it would have to attain the Soviet growth rate.

Warren Nutter wrote the present book before he was catapulted, within 24 hours, from his professorial chair into the Pentagon. He estimates that the size of the Soviet arms program "is roughly equivalent to ours. The burden imposed on the Soviet economy is, however, three times as great as here. The message spelled out clearly by history is that economic strength is a poor gauge of military power, and vice versa."

since Nutter has also accomplished the unique feat of writing a readable book on the USSR, this substitution is strongly recommended.

The Communists promised that they would solve the "social question." Yet after fifty years of Bolshevik rule, the average family income was about \$1,500 a year, "or half the standard set by our present Administration as the 'poverty level' for Americans." Average Americans are "about five times as well off as the Ivanovs." "To enjoy a standard of living about a fifth of ours, the Soviet Union employs a labor force one-and-a-half times as large. The work force constitutes 75 per cent of the adult population there as compared with 57 per cent here. In the case of women, the respective figures are 50 per cent and 37 per cent. To purchase a basket of food intermediate between United States and Soviet standards, a wage earner in Moscow must work about eight times as long as one in New York City."

In agriculture, the Soviet Union is using "a labor force more than nine times the size of ours." Yet its output is only 70 to 80 per cent as large. "Our government estimates current Soviet industrial production to be about half the level in this country. . . . To put it at a third would seem to be more reasonable. . . . The Soviet Union employs 40 per cent more industrial workers . . . than we do. Hence the output per worker there would seem to be a fourth as large as here.

"Soviet performance in terms of sheer quantitative growth is just as impressive as ours, and in that respect full credit must be given. However . . . our economic development has swept across all sectors and emphasized continual enhancement of consumer welfare. Theirs has focused on growth of industry and aggrandizement of national power. Ours has come mainly from innovation and improved efficiency in the use of resources, theirs from expanded employment of resources."

In his discussion of the national question in the USSR, Nutter describes the "mistreatment of the Jewish minority." The many American Jews who can't quite bring themselves to look at the Soviet Union realistically might want to read those passages carefully. "The same thing can happen at any time to other identifiable ethnic or racial groups incurring the displeasure of the state."

There is practically no aspect of the Ivanovs' strange world that Nutter does not touch, whether it be political (the Soviet political system, the role of the Communist Party, sham democracy, the legal system and the secret police); economic (the "advanced stage of obsolescence" of the Soviet economic system and the enormous economic losses, unemployment without unemployment insurance, restrictions on consumers' choices, absence of private credit, housing conditions); or cultural and social (education, thought control, continued opposition to religion, control of residence and travel, forcing of collective peasants to stay on the farm, inroads on free time, lack of organized private charity). He examines, in short, the pursuit of happiness in the class society of the USSR under Communism.

The Soviet attitude to war is described in George Orwell's words: "By becoming continuous, war has ceased to exist. . . . A peace that was truly permanent would be the same as a permanent war. This . . . is the inner meaning of the party slogan 'war is peace.'"

What about the future? "Like their predecessors, today's rulers recognize that Soviet society is sick, but they know equally well that to cure the patient is to kill the doctor." This is the age-old "dilemma of the Czars" and it means that "reforms are blocked." I hope Nutter is wrong on this point. For, if he is right, the inevitable catastrophic downfall of Soviet totalitarianism could have, extremely dangerous repercussions the world over.

NUTTER'S BOOK, which originated in a series of articles commissioned by the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, can be read in the short time required for a late-late show. Since it provides most of the basic knowledge needed by the educated American about the USSR, and